JERRY AND SUE Lanz have been an integral part of the community for more than 20 years. The couple owns Lanz Boiler Repair and are avid supporters of the Camas School District. They were honored as Business People of the Year in 1992.

Sue and Jerry Lanz

Camas couple are well known for being generous with their time and money to better the community

By JONATHAN BURTON
The Post-Record

Jerry Lanz didn't know how much his wife Sue donated to the Camas High School Jazz Mechanics fund-raising drive. When she said the amount he didn't flinch, even though it wasn't a small chunk of change.

"He has never thrown a hissy fit about anything I have done," Sue said.

Jerry and Sue met each other in high school—Jerry's sister and Sue were friends. "I couldn't stand her then," Jerry said, they both laughed. "He went away in the service and I was the only one left when he came back," Sue said.

Portland was home then. After Jerry came back they were married and about 10 years later, moved to Camas around Easter 1971. "When we moved here Safeway wasn't even open on Sunday," Sue said.

In those 20—plus years the couple have become an integral part of the community. They are humble about their contributions, but others have recognized their efforts. In 1992 they were honored by the Camas-Washougal Chamber of Commerce and Post-Record as, "Business People of the Year."

Then Camas High School (CHS) Principal Jim Dunn, quoted in a June 1992 article said, "Their general enthusiasm and support for our school system has been a real plus for us. In addition to their own wonderful kids, they have raised a number of foster children, and housed AFS students," Dunn said.

Around the time they received the award CHS was granted money through a state program called "Dollars for Scholars." The grant was contingent on getting someone to match the money provided by the state.

"We told them about it and Sue just handed us the check," Dunn said.

Sue and Jerry started Lanz Boiler repair in December 1980, and although the business is quite successful, things aren't always easy. Sue noted three times in particular when they were concerned about the [illegible]alth of the business and the fate of their [illegible]ployees.

[illegible]ike any well oiled family unit, they [illegible]itinue plugging away at life. Their family home sits on 10 acres and both of them [illegible]cribe it as "a big house." One week the [illegible]azs had 13 kids and one mom live with [illegible]m during a baseball tournament. Sue has [illegible]nd memories of children playing in the [illegible]ard outside her kitchen window.

Space for children to play was important to their family and Sue gets pretty bent out of shape with some of the new homes being built in the area.

"I hate to see all those mammoth houses on those tiny lots. The kids play in the street because they don't have a yard. I think some of them are so large they are grotesque. It doesn't seem to be a cozy family home," Sue said with conviction. Then she relaxed and turned to Jerry, "I got wound."

"Mother doesn't lecture," Jerry said. "On the other hand I believe, and mother believes that the schools and quality of life is much better than most places.

"Camas for several years has never turned down a school bond or levy until recently. We are still head and shoulders above the rest," Jerry said.

He is confident the area will continue to maintain the quality of life he talks about because the city is on the cutting edge of growth management compliance, Jerry said. "They took these things into consideration several years ago," he said. "Growth is going to happen all you can do is put it in a manner to please the majority of the people."

While they are very outspoken on several local growth issues, they maintain humility about their financial contributions.

"If we have a little extra money I like to keep it in the community," Sue said.